

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action dated February 5, 2007. Therein, the Examiner rejected claims 20-37 under 35 USC Section 102(e), as anticipated by Globerman, US patent No. 5776161. Further, there were rejections under provisions of obviousness-type double patenting.

Applicants propose to file a terminal disclaimer to remove the double patenting rejection. This will be done when the claims are indicated to be allowable.

Independent claims 20 and 29 are amended in a few varied ways. First, the "ends" are appropriately switched, so that they are now connected in the same "direction" along the longitudinal axis. Second, the connector member element is added, so that it is clear that each adjacent ring is connected by connectors. Finally, it is disclosed that the curved portions are generally placed along the longitudinal axis.

As to Globerman, the Examiner is respectfully traversed. He has identified connectors as the "circumferentially displaced struts," and not a member of the cylindrical ring. Accordingly, it is submitted that he is missing an element of each of the claims. Thus, claims 20-37 are not anticipated. Nor are they rendering obvious by Globerman. In no way does he describe the disclosed spring elements or the rings, as are described and claimed here.

An action indicating the allowability of claims 20-37 is earnestly solicited.

Serial No. 10/791,345
JJJ-49 CON

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Account No. 10-0750/JJI-49USCNT/PAC.

Respectfully submitted,

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